Domestic Child Workers

2417. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that millions of children below the age of twelve years are working as domestic help in all metropolitan cities;

(b) if so, what resolution Government intend to introduce to protect these innocent children from working as domestic help;

(c) whether most of the children working as domestic help are ill-treated, abused and even beaten-up by their maters; and

(d) if so, whether Government intend to form a task force with help of local Police that would check on all children working as domestic help?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): (a) to (c) No specific survey has been made in the metropolitan cities regarding number of domestic child labour. Government is committed to the goal of elimination of child labour in all its forms. In pursuance of this objective, Government has issued a Notification on 14.10.1999 prohibiting Government servants from employing children below the age of 14 years for any kind of work.

(d) There is no such proposal at present.

Fixation of Minimum Wages

2418. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any final decision with regard to the fixation of minimum wages;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the decision has been taken in consultation with various State Government and recognised Trade Union Organisations;

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) if answer to part (a) above is in the negative, the reasons therefor; and

(f) by when a decision thereon is likely to be finalised?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): (a) to (f) The minimum wages are already being fixed under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 primarily with a view to safeguard the interest of unorganised sector workers who are generally illiterate and vulnerable to exploitation due to lack of bargaining power. Under the provisions of the Act, both Central and State Governments are the appropriate Governments to fix minimum wages in respect of scheduled employments under their respective jurisdictions. There are 45 scheduled employments in Central sphere and 1232 in the State spheres. In fixing the minimum wages, the norms recommended by the Indian Labour Conference (ILC) in its 15th Session and subsequent judicial pronouncements are taken into account. The ILC comprises representatives of Central Trade Union Organisations, State Governments and Employers' Associations. The Government is exploring the possibilities of enactment of a unified Law on Wages including minimum wages in the light of the recommendations of the Second National Commission on Labour. However, given the procedures involved, it may not be possible to specify any time frame for the same.

Elimination of Child Labour

2419. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether any steps are being taken by Government to eliminate child labour and bonded labour in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) where there are still child labour and bonded labour in some parts of the country;

(d) if so, the steps taken to identify and rehabilitate them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): (a) and (b) In order to eliminate child labour in the country, the Government had adopted a National Child Labour Policy in 1987. This policy consists of three components:

(i) A Legislative Action Plan;